

1 Chapter 08

2 Interagency Coordination & Cooperation

3

4 Introduction

5 Fire management planning, preparedness, prevention, suppression, fire use,
6 restoration and rehabilitation, monitoring, research, and education will be
7 conducted on an interagency basis with the involvement of cooperators and
8 partners. The same capabilities used in wildland fire management will also be
9 used, when appropriate and authorized, on non-fire incidents in the United
10 States and on both wildland fires and non-fire incidents internationally.

11

12 National Wildland Fire Cooperative Agreements

13

14 USDOl and USDA Interagency Agreement for Fire Management

15 The objectives of the Interagency Agreement for Fire Management Between the
16 Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), National
17 Park Service (NPS), Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) of the United States
18 Department of the Interior (DOI) and the Forest Service (FS) of the United
19 States Department of Agriculture are:

20 To provide a basis for cooperation among the agencies on all aspects of wildland
21 fire management and as authorized in non-fire emergencies.

22 To facilitate the exchange of personnel, equipment (including aircraft), supplies,
23 services, and funds among the agencies.

24

25 DOI, USDA, and DOD Interagency Agreement

26 The purpose of the Interagency Agreement for the Provision of Temporary
27 Support During Wildland Firefighting Operations among the United States
28 Department of the Interior, the United States Department of Agriculture, and the
29 United States Department of Defense is

30 To establish the general guidelines, terms and conditions under which NIFC will
31 request, and DOD will provide, temporary support to NIFC in wildland fire
32 emergencies occurring within all 50 States, the District of Columbia, and all
33 U.S. Territories and Possessions, including fires on States and private lands. It
34 is also intended to provide the basis for reimbursement of DOD under the
35 Economy Act.

36

37 These and other agreements pertinent to interagency wildland fire management
38 can be found in their entirety in the National Interagency Mobilization Guide
39 (NFES #2092).

40

41 National Wildland Fire Oversight Structure

42

43 Wildland Fire Leadership Council (WFLC)

44 The Council is a cooperative, interagency organization dedicated to achieving
45 consistent implementation of the goals, actions, and policies in the National Fire
46 Plan and the Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy. The Council provides

leadership and oversight to ensure policy coordination, accountability and effective implementation of the National Fire Plan and the Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy.

The Council consists of the Department of Agriculture's Undersecretary for Natural Resources and the Environment and the Chief of the U.S. Forest Service, the Department of the Interior's Directors of the National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, the Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs and the Chief of Staff to the Secretary of the Interior. Staffing the Council will be coordinated by the Department of Agriculture's Office of Fire and Aviation Management and the Department of the Interior's Office of Wildland Fire Coordination.

Office of Wildland Fire Coordination (OWFC)

The Office of Wildland Fire Coordination (OWFC) is a Department of the Interior organization responsible for managing, coordinating and overseeing the Department's wildland fire management programs and policies. They include: smoke management, preparedness, suppression, emergency stabilization and rehabilitation, rural fire assistance, prevention, biomass, hazardous fuels, budget and financial initiatives, and information technology. The OWFC also coordinates with interagency partners including government and non-government groups.

~~The National Fire and Aviation Executive Board (NFAEB)~~

~~The National Fire and Aviation Executive Board (NFAEB) is a self-directed group comprised of the federal agency Fire Directors established to resolve wildland fire management issues common to its members. The board seeks to improve coordination and integration of federal fire and aviation programs, while recognizing individual agency missions. The Board focuses on issues currently impacting wildland fire management and provides a forum for better utilization of fire management resources.~~

National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG)

The National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) is made up of the USDA Forest Service (FS); four Department of the Interior agencies: Bureau of Land Management (BLM), National Park Service (NPS), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), and the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS); and State forestry agencies through the National Association of State Foresters (NASF). The mission of the NWCG is to provide leadership in establishing and maintaining consistent interagency standards and guidelines, qualifications, and communications for wildland fire management. Its goal is to provide more effective execution of each agency's fire management program. The group provides a formalized system to agree upon standards of training, equipment, qualifications, and other operational functions.

1 Multi-Agency Management and Coordination

2
3 National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group
4 National multi-agency coordination is overseen by the National Multi-Agency
5 Coordination (NMAC) Group, which consists of one representative each from
6 the following agencies: BLM, FWS, NPS, BIA, FS, NASF, and the Federal
7 Emergency Management Agency - United States Fire Administration (FEMA-
8 USFA), who have been delegated authority by their respective agency directors
9 to manage wildland fire operations on a national scale when fire management
10 resource shortages are probable. The delegated authorities include:
11 Provide oversight of general business practices between the National Multi-
12 Agency Coordination (NMAC) group and the Geographic Area Multi-Agency
13 Coordination (GMAC) groups.
14 Establish priorities among geographic areas.
15 Direct, control, allocate, and reallocate resources among or between geographic
16 areas to meet NMAC priorities.
17 Implement decisions of the NMAC.

18
19 Geographic Area Coordinating Groups

20 Geographic area multi-agency coordination is overseen by GMAC Groups,
21 which are comprised of geographic area (State, Region) lead administrators or
22 fire managers from agencies that have jurisdictional or support responsibilities,
23 or that may be significantly impacted by resource commitments. GMAC
24 responsibilities include:
25 Establish priorities for the geographic area.
26 Acquire, allocate, and reallocate resources.
27 Issue coordinated and collective situation status reports.

28
29 Sub-Geographic/Local Area Multi-Agency Coordinating Groups

30 Sub-geographic or local area multi-agency coordination is overseen by Sub-
31 Geographic/Local Area Multi-Agency Coordinating Groups, which are
32 comprised of local area lead administrators or fire managers from agencies that
33 have jurisdictional or support responsibilities, or that may be significantly
34 impacted by resource commitments. Local MAC responsibilities include:
35 Establish priorities for the local area.
36 Acquire, allocate, and reallocate resources.
37 Issue coordinated and collective situation status reports.

38
39 For additional information on MAC Groups see Chapter ~~11 of this book,~~
40 ~~Chapter~~ 30 of the National Interagency Mobilization Guide or pertinent
41 Geographic Area ~~mobilization guides~~ Mobilization Guides.

42
43 National Dispatch/Coordination System

44 The wildland fire dispatch system in the United States has three levels (tiers):
45 National
46 Geographic

1 Local

2
3 Logistical dispatch operations occur at all three levels, while initial attack
4 dispatch operations occur primarily at the local level. Any geographic area or
5 local dispatch center using a dispatch system outside the three-tier system must
6 justify why a non-standard system is being used.

7 BLM - Any geographic area or local dispatch center using a dispatch structure
8 outside the approved three-tier system must annually request written
9 authorization from the Director, Office of Fire and Aviation.

10 FS - Any geographic area or local dispatch center using a dispatch structure
11 outside the approved three-tier system must annually request written
12 authorization from the Forest Service Regional Director of Fire and Aviation.

13
14 National Interagency Mobilization Guide

15 The National Interagency Mobilization Guide (NFES 2092) identifies standard
16 procedures which guide the operations of multi-agency logistical support
17 activity throughout the coordination system. The guide is intended to facilitate
18 interagency dispatch coordination, ensuring timely and cost effective incident
19 support. Local and Geographic Area Mobilization Guides should be used to
20 supplement the National Interagency Mobilization Guide.

21
22 Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook
23 All federal agencies have adopted the National Wildfire Coordinating Group
24 (NWCG) Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook (IIBMH) as the
25 official guide to provide execution of each agency's incident business
26 management program. Unit offices, geographic areas, or NWCG may issue
27 supplements, as long as policy or conceptual data is not changed.

28
29 Policy

30 Since consistent application of interagency policies and guidelines is essential,
31 procedures in the IIBMH will be followed. Agency manuals provide a bridge
32 between manual sections and the IIBMH so that continuity of agency manual
33 systems is maintained and all additions, changes, and supplements are filed in a
34 uniform manner.

35 BLM - The IIBMH replaces BLM Manual Section 1111.

36 FWS - Refer to Service Manual 095 FW 3 Wildland Fire Management.

37 NPS - Refer to RM-18.

38 FS - Refer to FSH 5109.34.

39
40 National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC)

41 The National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC) is located at the National
42 Interagency Fire Center (NIFC), Boise, Idaho. The principal mission of the
43 NICC is the cost-effective and timely coordination of land management agency
44 emergency response for wildland fire at the national level. This is accomplished
45 through planning, situation monitoring, and expediting resources orders between
46 the BIA Areas, BLM States, NASF, FWS Regions, FS Regions, NPS Regions,

1 National Weather Service (NWS) Regions, Federal Emergency Management
2 Agency (FEMA) Regions through the United States Fire Administration
3 (USFA), and other cooperating agencies.

4
5 NICC supports non-fire emergencies when tasked by an appropriate agency,
6 such as FEMA, through the National Response Plan. NICC collects and
7 consolidates information from the GACCs and disseminates the National
8 Incident Management Situation Report through the NICC website at
9 <http://www.nifc.gov/nicc/sitreprt.pdf>

10
11 Geographic Area Coordination Centers (GACCs)

12 There are 11 GACCs, each of which serves a specific geographic portion of the
13 United States. Each GACC interacts with the local dispatch centers, as well as
14 with NICC and neighboring GACCs. Refer to the National Interagency
15 Mobilization Guide for a complete directory of GACC locations, addresses, and
16 personnel.

17
18 The principal mission of each GACC is to provide the cost-effective and timely
19 coordination of emergency response for all incidents within the specified
20 geographic area. GACCs are also responsible for determining needs,
21 coordinating priorities, and facilitating the mobilization of resources from their
22 areas to other geographic areas.

23
24 Each GACC prepares an intelligence report that consolidates fire and resource
25 status information received from each of the local dispatch centers in its area.
26 This report is sent to NICC and to the local dispatch centers, caches, and agency
27 managers in the geographic area.

28
29 Local Dispatch Centers

30 Local dispatch centers, are located throughout the country as dictated by the
31 needs of fire management agencies. The principal mission of a local dispatch
32 center is to provide safe, timely, and cost-effective coordination of emergency
33 response for all incidents within its specified geographic area. This most often
34 entails the coordination of initial attack responses and the ordering of additional
35 resources when fires escape initial attack.

36
37 Local dispatch centers are also responsible for supplying intelligence
38 information relating to fires and resource status to their GACC and to their
39 agency managers and cooperators. Local dispatch centers may work for or with
40 numerous agencies, but should only report to one GACC.

41
42 Some local dispatch centers are also tasked with law enforcement and agency
43 administrative workloads for non-fire operations; if this is the case, a
44 commensurate amount of funding and training should be provided by the
45 benefiting activity to accompany the increased workload. If a non-wildland fire
46 workload is generated by another agency operating in an interagency dispatch

center, the agency generating the additional workload should offset this increased workload with additional funding or personnel.

Standards for Cooperative Agreements

Agreement Policy

Agreements will be comprised of two components: the actual agreement and an operations plan. The agreement will outline the authority and general responsibilities of each party and the operations plan will define the specific operating procedures.

Any agreement which obligates federal funds or commits anything of value must be signed by the appropriate warranted contracting officer. Specifications for funding responsibilities should include billing procedures and schedules for payment.

Any agreement that extends beyond a fiscal year must be made subject to the availability of funds. Any transfer of federal property must be in accordance with federal property management regulations.

All agreements must undergo periodic joint review; and, as appropriate, revision.

Assistance in preparing agreements can be obtained from local or state office fire and/or procurement staff.

All appropriate agreements and operating plans will be provided to the servicing dispatch center. The authority to enter into interagency agreements is extensive. BLM - BLM Manual 9200, Departmental Manual 620 DM, the Reciprocal Fire Protection Act, 42 U.S.C. 1856, and the Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy and Program Review.

FWS - Service Manual, Departmental Manual 620 DM, and Reciprocal Fire Protection Act, 42U.S.C. 1856.

NPS - Chapter 2, Federal Assistance and Interagency Agreements Guideline (DO-20), and the Departmental Manual 620 (DM-620). NPS-RM-18, Interagency Agreements, Release Number 1, 02/22/99.

FS - FSM 1580, 5106.2 and FSH 1509.11.

Elements of an Agreement

The following elements should be addressed in each agreement:

The authorities appropriate for each party to enter in an agreement.

The roles and responsibilities of each agency signing the agreement.

An element addressing the cooperative roles of each participant in prevention, pre-suppression, suppression, fuels, and prescribed fire management operations.

Reimbursements/Compensation - All mutually approved operations that require reimbursement and/or compensation will be identified and agreed to by all

1 participating parties through a cost-share agreement. The mechanism and
2 timing of the funding exchanges will be identified and agreed upon.
3 Appropriation Limitations - Parties to this agreement are not obligated to make
4 expenditures of funds or reimbursements of expenditures under terms of this
5 agreement unless the Congress of the United States of America appropriates
6 such funds for that purpose by the Counties of - _____, by the Cities of _____,
7 and/or the Governing Board of Fire Commissioners of _____.
8 Liabilities/Waivers - Each party waives all claims against every other party for
9 compensation for any loss, damage, personal injury, or death occurring as a
10 consequence of the performance of this agreement unless gross negligence on
11 any part of any party is determined.
12 Termination Procedure - The agreement shall identify the duration of the
13 agreement and cancellation procedures.
14 A signature page identifying the names of the responsible officials should be
15 included in the agreement.
16 NPS - Refer to DO-20 for detailed instructions and format for developing
17 agreements.

18
19 Annual Operating Plans (AOPs)

20 Annual Operating Plan, shall be reviewed, updated, and approved prior to the
21 fire season. The plan may be amended after a major incident as part of a joint
22 debriefing and review.
23 The plan shall contain detailed, specific procedures which will provide for safe,
24 efficient, and effective operations.

25
26 Elements of an AOP

27 The following items shall be addressed in the AOP:

28 Mutual Aid

29 The AOP should address that there may be times when cooperators are involved
30 in emergency operations and unable to provide mutual aid. In this case other
31 cooperators may be contacted for assistance.

32 Command Structure

33 Unified command should be used, as appropriate, whenever multiple
34 jurisdictions are involved, unless one or more parties request a single agency
35 incident commander (IC). If there is a question about jurisdiction, fire managers
36 should mutually decide and agree on the command structure as soon as they
37 arrive on the fire; agency administrators should confirm this decision as soon as
38 possible. Once this decision has been made, the incident organization in use
39 should be relayed to all units on the incident as well as dispatch centers. In all
40 cases, the identity of the IC must be made known to all fireline and support
41 personnel.

42
43 Communications

44 ~~Radios being used in wildland firefighting operations must be able to function in~~
45 ~~both wideband and narrowband mode.~~ In mutual aid situations, a common
46 designated radio frequency identified in the AOP should be used for incident

1 communications. All incident resources should utilize and monitor this
2 frequency for incident information, tactical use, and changes in weather
3 conditions or other emergency situations. In some cases, because of equipment
4 availability/ capabilities, departments/ agencies may have to use their own
5 frequencies for tactical operations, allowing the “common” frequency to be the
6 link between departments. It is important that all department /agencies change
7 to a single frequency or establish a common communications link as soon as
8 practical. Clear text should be used. Avoid personal identifiers, such as names.
9 This paragraph in the Annual Operating Plan shall meet Federal
10 Communications Commission (FCC) requirements for documenting shared use
11 of radio frequencies.
12 Distance/Boundaries
13 Responding and requesting parties should identify any mileage limitations from
14 mutual boundaries where “mutual aid” is either pay or non-pay status. Also, for
15 some fire departments, the mileage issue may not be one of initial attack
16 “mutual aid,” but of mutual assistance. In this situation, you may have the
17 option to make it part of this agreement or identify it as a situation where the
18 request would be made to the agency having jurisdiction, which would then
19 dispatch the fire department.
20 Time/Duration
21 Responding and requesting parties should identify time limitations (usually 24
22 hours) for resources in a non-reimbursable status, and “rental rates” when the
23 resources are in a reimbursable status. Use of geographic area interagency
24 equipment rates is strongly encouraged.
25 Qualifications/Minimum Requirements
26 Agencies, under the National Interagency Incident Management System
27 (NIIMS) concept, have agreed to accept cooperator’s standards for fire
28 personnel qualifications and equipment during initial attack. Once jurisdiction is
29 clearly established, then the standards of the agency(s) with jurisdiction prevail.
30 This direction may be found in the documents NWCG [Clarification of of](#)
31 [Qualifications Standards - Initial Attack 6/20/01](#).
32 Reimbursement/Compensation
33 Compensation should be “standard” for all fire departments in the geographic
34 area. The rates identified shall be used. Reimbursements should be negotiated
35 on a case-by-case basis, as some fire departments may not expect full
36 compensation, but only reimbursement for their actual costs. Vehicles and
37 equipment operated under the federal excess property system will only be
38 reimbursed for maintenance and operating costs.
39 Cooperation
40 The annual operating plan will be used to identify how the cooperators will
41 share expertise, training, and information on items such as prevention,
42 investigation, safety, and training.
43
44 Dispatch Center
45 Dispatch centers will ensure all resources know the name of the assigned IC and
46 announce all changes in incident command. Geographic Area Mobilization

1 Guides, Zone Mobilization Guides and Local Mobilization Guides should
2 include this procedure as they are revised for each fire season.

3 4 Types of Agreements

5 6 National Interagency Agreements

7 The national agreement, which serves as an umbrella for interagency assistance
8 among federal agencies is the ~~Interagency Agreement Between~~interagency
9 ~~agreement between~~ the Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Indian Affairs,
10 National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service of the United States
11 —Department of the Interior, and the Forest Service of the United States
12 Department of Agriculture. This and other national agreements give substantial
13 latitude while providing a framework for the development of state and local
14 agreements and operating plans.

15 16 Regional/State Interagency Agreements

17 Regional and state cooperative agreements shall be developed for mutual aid
18 assistance. These agreements are essential to the fire management program.
19 Concerns for area-wide scope should be addressed through these agreements.

20 21 Local Interagency Agreements

22 Local units are responsible for developing agreements or contracts with local
23 agencies and fire departments to meet mutual needs for suppression and/or
24 prescribed fire services.

25 26 Emergency Assistance

27 Approved, established interagency emergency assistance agreements are the
28 appropriate and recommended way to provide emergency assistance. If no
29 agreements are established, refer to your agency administrator to determine the
30 authorities delegated to your agency to provide emergency assistance.

31 32 Contracts

33 Contracts may be used where they are the most cost-effective means of
34 providing for protection commensurate with established standards. A contract,
35 however, does not absolve an agency administrator of the responsibility for
36 managing a fire program. The office's approved fire management plan must
37 define the role of the contractor in the overall program.

38
39 Contracts should be developed and administered in accordance with federal
40 acquisition regulations. In particular, a contract should specify conditions for
41 abandonment of a fire in order to respond to a new call elsewhere.

42 43 Domestic Non-Wildland Fire Coordination and Cooperation

44 45 Homeland Security Act

1 The Homeland Security Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-296) established the
2 Department of Homeland Security with the mandate and legal authority to
3 protect the American people from the continuing threat of terrorism. In the act,
4 Congress also assigned DHS as the primary focal point regarding natural and
5 manmade crises and emergency planning.

6 Stafford Act Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance

7 The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Public
8 Law 93-288, as amended) establishes the programs and processes for the Federal
9 Government to provide disaster and emergency assistance to states, local
10 governments, tribal nations, individuals, and qualified private non-profit
11 organizations. The provisions of the Stafford Act cover all hazards including
12 natural disasters and terrorist events. In a major disaster or emergency as
13 defined by the act, the President “may direct any federal agency, with or without
14 reimbursement, to utilize its authorities and the resources granted to it under
15 federal law (including personnel, equipment, supplies, facilities, and managerial,
16 technical, and advisory services) in support of state and local assistance efforts.”
17

18 Homeland Security Presidential Directive-5

19 HSPD-5, Management of Domestic Incidents, February 28, 2003, is intended to
20 enhance the ability of the United States to manage domestic incidents by
21 establishing a single, comprehensive national incident management system.
22 HSPD-5 designates the Secretary of Homeland Security and the Principal
23 Federal Official (PFO) for domestic incident management and empowers the
24 Secretary to coordinate Federal resources used in response to or recovery from
25 terrorist attacks, major disasters, or other emergencies in specific cases.
26

27 National Incident Management System (NIMS)

28 HSPD-5 directed that the DHS Secretary develop and administer a National
29 Incident Management System (NIMS) to provide a consistent, nationwide
30 approach for Federal, State, and local governments to work effectively and
31 efficiently together to prepare for, respond to, and recover from domestic
32 incidents, regardless of cause, size, or complexity. To provide for
33 interoperability and compatibility among federal, state, and local capabilities,
34 the NIMS will include a core set of concepts, principles, terminology, and
35 technologies covering the incident command system; multi-agency coordination
36 systems; unified command; training; identification and management of resources
37 (including systems for classifying types of resources); qualifications and
38 certification; and the collection, tracking, and reporting of incident information
39 and incident resources.
40

41 National Response Plan

42 Federal disaster relief and emergency assistance are managed under the
43 Department of Homeland Security/Emergency Preparedness and
44 Response/Federal Emergency Management Agency (DHS/EPR/FEMA) using
45 the National Response Plan (NRP). The NRP, using the NIMS, is an all-hazards
46

plan that establishes a single, comprehensive framework for the management of domestic incidents. The NRP provides the structure and mechanisms for the coordination of Federal support to State, local, and tribal incident managers; and for exercising direct Federal authorities and responsibilities.

Emergency Support Function (ESF) Annexes

The NRP includes 15 Emergency Support Function (ESF) Annexes, which are a component of the NRP that detail the mission, policies, structures, and responsibilities of Federal agencies for coordinating resource and programmatic support to the States, tribes, and other ~~Federal~~federal agencies or other jurisdictions and entities during ~~Incidents~~ of National Significance. Each ESF Annex identifies the ESF coordinator and the primary and support agencies pertinent to the ESF. The primary agency serves as a Federal executive agent under the Federal Coordinating Officer to accomplish the ESF mission. Support agencies, when requested by the DHS or the designated ESF primary agency, are responsible for conducting operations using their own authorities, subject-matter experts, capabilities, or resources. USDA-FS is the coordinator and primary agency for ESF #4 – Firefighting. Other USDA-FS and DOI responsibilities are:

ESF Support Annex	USDA-FS Role	DOI Role
#1-01 Transportation	Support	Support
#2-02 Communications	Support	Support
#3-03 Public Works and Engineering	Support	Support
#4-04 Firefighting	Coord. & Primary	Support
#5-05 Emergency Management	Support	Support
#6-06 Mass Care, Housing, and Human Services	Support	Support
#7-07 Resource Support	Support	
#8-08 Public Health and Medical Services	Support	
#9-09 Urban Search and Rescue	Support	
#10-010 Oil and HazMat Response	Support	Support
#11-011 Agriculture and Natural Resources		Primary
#12-012 Energy		Support
#13-013 Public Safety and Security	Support	Support
#14-014 Long-term Community Recovery and Mitigation		Support
#15-015 External Affairs		Support

Non-Stafford Act Non-Wildland Fire Coordination and Cooperation

In an actual or potential Incident of National Significance that is not encompassed by the Stafford Act, the President may instruct a Federal department or agency, subject to any statutory limitations on the department or agency, to utilize the authorities and resources granted to it by Congress. In accordance with Homeland Security Presidential Directive-5, Federal departments and agencies are expected to provide their full and prompt support.

cooperation, available resources, ~~and support, and appropriate and~~ consistent with their own responsibilities for protecting national security.

International Wildland Fire Coordination and Cooperation

U.S. - Mexico Cross Border Cooperation on Wildland Fires

In June of 1999, the Department of Interior and the Department of Agriculture signed a Wildfire Protection Agreement with Mexico. The agreement has two purposes:

To enable wildfire protection resources originating in the territory of one country to cross the United States-Mexico border in order to suppress wildfires on the other side of the border within the zone of mutual assistance (10 miles/16 kilometers) in appropriate circumstances.

To give authority for Mexican and U.S. fire management organizations to cooperate on other fire management activities outside the zone of mutual assistance.

National Operational Guidelines for this agreement are located in Chapter 40 of the National Interagency Mobilization Guide. These guidelines cover issues at the national level and also provide a template for those issues that need to be addressed in local operating plans. The local operating plans identify how the agreement will be implemented by the GACCs (and Zone Coordination Centers) that have dispatching responsibility on the border. The local operating plans will provide the standard operational procedures for wildfire suppression resources that could potentially cross the U.S. border into Mexico.

U.S. - Canada, Reciprocal Forest Firefighting Arrangement

Information about United States - Canada cross border support is located in Chapter 40 of the National Interagency Mobilization Guide. This chapter provides policy guidance, which was determined by an exchange of diplomatic notes between the U.S. and Canada in 1982. This chapter also provides operational guidelines for the Canada - U.S. Reciprocal Forest Fire Fighting Arrangement. These guidelines are updated yearly.

U.S. - Australia/New Zealand Wildland Fire Arrangement

Information about United States - Australia/New Zealand support is located in Chapter 40 of the National Interagency Mobilization Guide. This chapter provides a copy of the arrangements signed between the U.S. and the states of Australia and the country of New Zealand for support to one another during severe fire seasons. It also contains the Annual Operating Plan that provides more detail on the procedures, responsibilities, and requirements used during activation.

International Non-Wildland Fire Coordination and Cooperation

International Disasters Support

1 Federal wildland fire employees may be requested through the Forest Service, to
2 support the U.S. Government's (USG) response to international disasters by
3 serving on Disaster Assistance Response Teams (DARTs). A DART is the
4 operational equivalent of an ICS team used by the U.S. Agency for International
5 Development's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) to provide an on-
6 the-ground operational capability at the site of an international disaster. Prior to
7 being requested for a DART assignment, employees will have completed a
8 weeklong DART training course covering information about:
9 USG agencies charged with the responsibility to coordinate USG responses to
10 international disaster.
11 The purpose, organizational structure, and operational procedures of a DART.
12 How the DART relates to other international organizations and countries during
13 an assignment. Requests for these assignments are coordinated through the FS
14 International Programs, Disaster Assistance Support Program (DASP).
15 DART assignments should not be confused with technical exchange activities,
16 which do not require DART training. More information about DARTs can be
17 obtained at the FS International Program's website:
18 <http://www.fs.fed.us/global/aboutus/dasp/welcome.htm>.